

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 25 have been canceled.

Claims 1, 23, 24 and 26 have been amended.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

- 1 1 (Currently amended). A self-locking bolt assembly comprising:
- 2 (a) a bolt including a threaded shank, an axial bore extending through the
- 3 shank, the bore including a threaded bore section, a tapered end section, and a bore midsection
- 4 'between the threaded bore section and the tapered end section;
- 5 (b) a screw set pin including a screw section having threads for engaging the
- 6 threaded bore section and a pin shaft having a tapered end section for engaging the tapered end
- 7 section of the bore, the pin shaft having a proximal end attached to the screw section, the pin
- 8 shaft being sufficiently long to ensure that when the tapered distal end section engages the

9 tapered end section of the bore the screw set pin then can be screwed a predetermined distance
10 further into the bore without galling threads of the screw section and the threaded bore section[,
11 and];

12 (c) said tapered end section of the pin shaft having a taper angle that is less
13 than a taper angle of the tapered end section of the bore to allow a narrowed end portion of the
14 tapered end section of the pin shaft to engage a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section
15 of the bore[.]; and

16 (d) the distal end of the pin shaft having a larger diameter than the reduced
17 diameter end section of the bore such that its periphery is adapted to engage the tapered end
18 section of the bore.

2 (Canceled) .

1 3 (Previously amended). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 1 including a
2 plurality of slits extending through a distal end section of the shank that includes the tapered end
3 section of the bore.

1 4 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 3 wherein the plurality of slits
2 includes a pair of diametrically opposed slits.

1 5 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 1 wherein a proximal end of the
2 screw set pin includes a feature for applying torque to the screw set pin.

1 6 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 5 wherein the torque-applying
2 feature includes a key opening for receiving a torque-applying device.

1 7 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 1 wherein the pin shaft has a
2 diameter that is less than a diameter of the threaded bore section to allow the pin shaft to pass
3 through the threaded bore section without engaging threads thereof.

1 8 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 1 wherein the bolt includes a bolt
2 head attached to the shank, and wherein the bore extends through the bolt head.

1 9 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 1 including a body having a

2 threaded bolt-receiving hole therein, with the screw set pin tightened sufficiently into the bolt to
3 cause the tapered end section of the pin shaft to expand a distal end section of the shank enough
4 that threads of the shank tightly engage threads of the bolt-receiving hole and become locked
5 into the body.

1 10 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 3 including a body having a
2 threaded bolt-receiving hole therein, with the screw set pin tightened sufficiently into the bolt to
3 cause the tapered end section of the pin shaft to sufficiently expand fingers defined by the slits
4 that central contact areas of the fingers elastically deform and dig into the bolt-receiving hole
5 enough to securely lock the bolt to the body.

1 11 (Original). The self-locking bolt assembly of claim 10 wherein edge contact areas of
2 the fingers deform and dig into the tapered end section of the pin shaft enough to securely lock
3 the screw set pin to the bolt.

12 (Canceled).

13 (Canceled).

14 (Canceled)

15 (Canceled)

16 (Canceled)

17 (Canceled).

18 (Canceled)

19 (Canceled)

20 (Canceled)

21 (Canceled)

1 22 (Previously presented). A method of using a self-locking bolt assembly including a
2 bolt including a threaded shank having an axial bore extending through the shank for receiving a
3 screw set pin including a screw section having threads for engaging a threaded bore section of
4 the bore, the screw set pin also including a tapered end section, the method comprising:

(a) providing a bore midsection between the threaded bore section and the tapered end section;

(b) providing a pin shaft having one end attached to the screw section and a tapered end section for engaging the tapered end section of the bore, the pin shaft being sufficiently long to ensure that when the tapered distal end section of the pin shaft engages the tapered end section of the bore the screw set pin then can be tightened a predetermined distance further into the bore without galling threads of the screw section and the threaded bore section;

(c) screwing the screw set pin sufficiently far into the bolt enough to abut the tapered end section of the pin shaft against the tapered end section of the bore, and causing only a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section of the pin shaft to engage a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section of the bore by providing the tapered end section of the pin shaft with a taper angle that is less than a taper angle of the tapered end section of the bore;

(d) providing a plurality of slits extending through a distal end section of the shank including the tapered end section of the bore; and

(e) tightening the screw set pin sufficiently far into the bolt that edge contact areas of the fingers deform and dig into the tapered end section of the pin shaft enough to securely lock the screw set pin to the bolt.

23 (Currently amended). A self-locking bolt assembly, for locking the assembly in a threaded bolt-receiving hole, comprising:

(a) a bolt including a threaded shank, an axial bore extending through the shank, the bore including a threaded bore section, a tapered end section, ~~and~~ a bore midsection between the threaded bore section and the tapered end section and a reduced diameter end section extending from the tapered end section;

(b) a screw set pin including a screw section having threads for engaging the threaded bore section and a pin shaft having a tapered end section for engaging the tapered end section of the bore, the pin shaft having a proximal end attached to the screw section, the pin shaft being sufficiently long to ensure that when the tapered distal end section engages the tapered end section of the bore the screw set pin then can be screwed a predetermined distance further into the bore without galling threads of the screw section and the threaded bore section;

(c) said tapered end section of the pin shaft having a taper angle that is less than a taper angle of the tapered end section of the bore to allow a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section of the pin shaft to engage a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section of the bore;

(d) the distal end of the pin shaft having a larger diameter than the reduced diameter end section of the bore such that its periphery is adapted to engage the tapered end

section of the bore;

~~(e)~~ (d) a plurality of slits extending through a distal end section of the shank that includes the tapered end section of the bore; and

~~(f)~~ (e) differential radius means for locking the self-locking bolt assembly into the threaded bolt-receiving hole in a body by tightening the screw set pin sufficiently far into the bolt to cause the tapered end section of the pin shaft to sufficiently expand fingers defined by the slits that central contact areas of the fingers elastically deform and dig into the bolt-receiving hole enough to securely lock the bolt to the body and to cause edge contact areas of the fingers to deform and dig into the tapered end section of the pin shaft enough to securely lock the screw set pin to the bolt.

24 (Currently amended). A method of using a self-locking bolt assembly, for locking the bolt in a threaded bolt-receiving hole, including a bolt including a threaded shank having an axial bore extending through the shank for receiving a screw set pin including a screw section having threads for engaging a threaded bore section of the bore, the screw set pin also including a tapered end section, the method comprising:

(a) providing a bore midsection between the threaded bore section and ~~the a~~

1 tapered end section and a plurality of slits extending through a distal end section of the shank
2 that includes the tapered end section of the bore;

3 (b) providing a pin shaft having one end attached to the screw section and a
4 tapered end section for engaging the tapered end section of the bore, the pin shaft being
5 sufficiently long to ensure that when the tapered distal end section of the pin shaft engages the
6 tapered end section of the bore the screw set pin then can be tightened a predetermined distance
7 further into the bore without galling threads of the screw section and the threaded bore section;

8 (c) screwing the screw set pin sufficiently far into the bolt enough to abut the
9 tapered end section of the pin shaft against the tapered end section of the bore, and causing only
10 a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section of the pin shaft to engage a narrowed end
11 portion of the tapered end section of the bore by providing the tapered end section of the pin
12 shaft with a taper angle that is less than a taper angle of the tapered end section of the bore; and

13 (d) providing differential radius means for locking the self-locking bolt
14 assembly into a threaded bolt-receiving hole in a body by tightening the screw set pin
15 sufficiently far into the bolt to cause the tapered end section of the pin shaft to sufficiently
16 expand fingers defined by the slits that central contact areas of the fingers elastically deform and
17 dig into the bolt-receiving hole enough to securely lock the bolt to the body and to cause edge
18 contact areas of the fingers to deform and dig into the tapered end section of the pin shaft enough
19 to securely lock the screw set pin to the bolt.

25 (Canceled)

1 26 (Currently amended). A self-locking bolt assembly comprising:

2 (a) a bolt including a threaded shank, an axial bore extending through the
3 shank, the bore including a threaded bore section, a tapered end section, ~~and~~ a bore midsection
4 between the threaded bore section and the tapered end section, and a reduced diameter end
5 section extending from the tapered end section;

6 (b) a screw set pin including a screw section having threads for engaging the
7 threaded bore section and a pin shaft having a tapered end section for engaging the tapered end
8 section of the bore, the pin shaft having a proximal end attached to the screw section, the pin
9 shaft being sufficiently long to ensure that when the tapered distal end section engages the
10 tapered end section of the bore the screw set pin then can be screwed a predetermined distance
11 further into the bore without galling threads of the screw section and the threaded bore section;

12 (c) said tapered end section of the pin shaft having a taper angle that is less
13 than a taper angle of the tapered end section of the bore to allow a narrowed end portion of the
14 tapered end section of the pin shaft to engage a narrowed end portion of the tapered end section
15 of the bore; ~~and~~

1 (d) the distal end of the pin shaft having a larger diameter than the reduced
2 diameter end section of the bore such that its periphery is adapted to engage the tapered end
3 section of the bore; and

4 (e) ~~(d)~~ means for locking the set screw pin to the bolt when a tapered end section
5 of the pin shaft engages the tapered end section of the bore.